

Hammerstrom's

for the people
in the 17th Senate District

Hotline



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MICHIGAN TO BEGIN SMALLPOX VACCINATIONS. The Michigan Department of Community Health this week announced that Michigan will move forward with its smallpox vaccination plans and begin vaccinating members of the state and regional public health response teams. The smallpox vaccine is very effective at preventing disease; however, there are some risks associated with it. Out of every one million people vaccinated in the past, one or two have died as a result of serious adverse reactions to the vaccine, while up to 50 others suffered life-threatening illnesses. Those who should not receive the vaccination include individuals who have the following conditions and the people that live with them: expectant mothers, people being treated for cancer, people who are HIV positive and people who have had an organ transplant. Additional information on smallpox and

smallpox vaccines can be found on the Michigan Department of Community Health website at: www.michigan.gov/mdch by clicking on "smallpox."

LAND USE COUNCIL ANNOUNCED. Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema, House Speaker Rick Johnson and Governor Jennifer Granholm recently announced a new bipartisan council to study land use and development issues in Michigan. Sikkema noted that a five percent increase in the state's population could result in a 20 percent increase in land use. The increased land use would lead to additional environmental concerns, including runoff, urban sprawl, increased solid waste production and the need for more sewer capacity. The Land Use Council has been created to conduct a comprehensive review of Michigan's land use, and is hoped to be as successful as the Great Lakes Conservation Task Force, created by the Republican Caucus' commitment to environmental concerns in 2002.

RESIDENTS HAVE PROTECTION AGAINST GAS GOUGING. Consumers who are concerned that service stations may be overcharging them for gasoline should call the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division toll-free number, (877) 765-8388. The price of gasoline is not regulated by the State of Michigan. However, Michigan has established a process to investigate and prosecute those who try to overcharge consumers. Any consumer, who notices suspicious gas prices, should contact the Michigan Consumer Protection Division. Citizens may contact the division Monday through Friday, from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. An online complaint form is also available at: www.michigan.gov/ag by following the Quick Link to "Consumer Protection."

DID YOU KNOW? Michigan grows over 65 species of trees on its more than 18.4 million acres of publicly owned forest and the largest national forest in the state is the Ottawa National Forest.